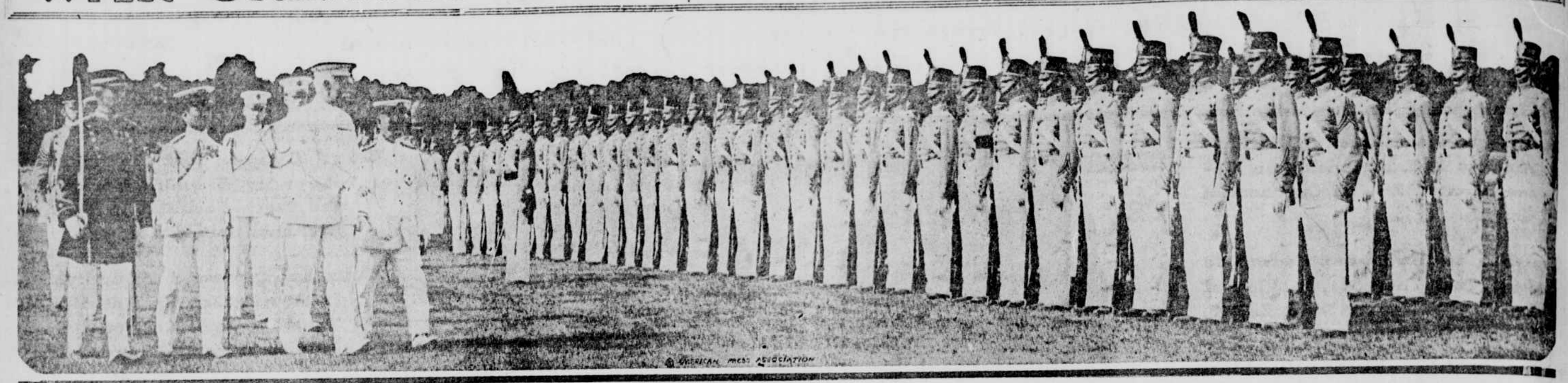
WAR CREATES GRAVE PERILS FOR U. S. TO MEET



Partitioning of Weak Latin American Nations, Says Professor Johnston, Is Among the Possibilities Entailing Great Danger for Us--Our Officers Not Sufficiently Trained.

This is the second of the series of articles written exclusively for The Tribune by Professor Johnston, noted authority on military matters, in analysis of our problem of national defence. The series is intended to reveal the defects of our present military system, as Professor Johnston sees them, and show how the most effective and economical scheme of defence can be developed.

By Professor R. M. Johnston.

IF THERE is a fixed relation between industrial and military power it is also true that military effort is measureable in business terms, or terms of efficiency. The triangle Chicago-Richmond-Boston represents the power of this country to wage war or its weakness to repel it, according to whether we are prepared or unprepared. The measures of preparedness necessary to defend this triangle are susceptible of precise definition. There are not two, three or four ways any one of which will more or less meet the problem, just as there are not two, three or four ways of running a great industrial enterprise such as that of Rockefeller or Ford. War is a far more complicated enterprise than the production of Standard oil or standardized automobiles, and there is only one way to consider military problems, which is to gauge them accurately and to measure the means for meeting them precisely.

We have already seen where our weakness lies, in the region of which New York is the centre. It therefore remains to consider the probable form of an attack on that point, the time factor in that attack and the power which that attack could develop. We shall then be in a position to measure the appropriate remedies.

An attack must come in the form of an expedition disembarking from transports. This is evidently a hazardous undertaking. It might be entirely ruined by our fleet, though of this there can be no guarantee. In a later article this question will receive special treatment. Even if placed ashore with complete success the disembarked army could not sustain itself except by occupying a great city like New York. And there it would meet with almost insurmountable difficulties in receiving reinforcements. Being a raid or gamble, we may therefore postulate small numbers, which the difficulty of sea transport further imposes. Three or four army corps, of 30,000 to 40,000 men each, is a moderate estimate of the size of the invader's army. It must be pointed out, however, that this calculation is not applicable to the California coast problem, where a different set of conditions apply, making the danger less probable, but of far greater magnitude.

Next, we ask, what are these invading troops worth? How much can they accomplish in terms of war work? And here we come to a vital question, on which our public absolutely must get enlightened or we may perish. In England and in this country there is a resolute and wicked conspiracy of silence as to the value of different kinds of troops. The issue is not in the least whether one Englishman or ten Englishmen, whether one American or ten Americans, can lick one or ten Germans. It is when you begin to multiply up the ten by a hundred, by a thousand, by a million, that the problem becomes progressively grave. It is in terms of large organized bodies, eventually of the armed nation, that the question is pertinent.

War as waged in Europe at the present day consists, one may say, in developing and maintaining an armed front of so many hundreds of miles, offensive at some points, defensive at others. Along every yard of that front the war work, whether offensive or defensive, must be carried out at the least possible expense of time, of lives and of money. And this necessity becomes greater as the defence prevails over the offence, and duration becomes the all important issue.

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Germany at the present day is more adept at this process than any other country. She can hold defensively more yards of front with fewer men at less expense than any other country. She can act offensively with greater vigor than any other. Many computations have been made of the number of German soldiers required to hold the western front during these last few months, but it is fair to average it at not over three men to the yard front. Some calculations have placed it much lower, and it is not improbable that there have been times during which the figure has dropped to about 2½ to the yard. The French line has been appreciably denser, but, on the other hand, has at many points continuously attempted to assume the offensive. The British army has apparently never held the defensive with fewer than ten men to the yard front, and on the offensive has employed up to about thirty men to the yard front. Now let us consider how the Germans achieve this result and what it represents in terms of finance.

The German army is, first and foremost, a body of trained experts; the men are the least matter. Even in 1870, when the General Staff knew far less than it does now, this was the case. Phil Sheridan, when at Gravelotte he saw several German army corps in a state of partial disbandment, declared that a corps of the Army of the Potomac could have walked through them in any direction. But he did not ask himself how it was that those German short service disbanded men on that day defeated the well ordered, long service men of Bazaine's army, which they did. And the answer, of course, was: The training of the officers, which more than compensated the lack of training and lack of cohesion of the men.

Training officers, unfortunately, means to the American citizen West Point. "General So-and-So was trained at West Point!" That is the unanswerable certificate of competence! German generals who know nothing more than what a cadet school teaches, with sundries of individual experience superadded, would be held guilty of murder if they attempted to handle German brigades and divisions in the field. Our own history is one long record of murder in this same sense, and the foundation of any real scheme of defence, as I shall show later, is to eliminate this hideous blot on our system; unfortunately for a reform scheme it would not cost even $1,000,000 to put through!

West Point trains the boy into a subaltern officer. To train a company commander is a matter of years. To train a field officer is more difficult, and so on progressively for staff officers, brigade and division commanders, army commanders and general staff officers. And it is at each successive grade upward that economy of effort becomes the more definite reward of high training. A single officer of the operations section of the General Staff, a profound student of military history and theory, may well represent a saving of a quarter of a million men on a front of 250 miles.

Germany draws the sharpest distinction in grading her first line, reserve and landwehr formations. The first only are capable of a strong offensive movement; the third are for rearward service, though usable at a pinch for defence. As between Germany's opponents, the French, Russian, English and Italian armies have values which, in terms of yards, expense and efficiency, vary greatly. It is, in fact, barely a paradox to say that the raising of a new conscript army in England which would give only very low results in war work would be of great service to Germany, for it would drain her opponent of about $5,000,000 a day for every million men raised, with little compensating advantage.

In asking, therefore, what amount of war power or work an invader might develop we are bound to be on the safe side and to state it in terms of first line French or German troops. They would be able to develop a front of, say, twenty to twenty-five miles, along about one-third of which they could assume the offensive. Our problem becomes, therefore, narrower. How could we hold such a line against such troops?

To this we may add the time factor. When, in 1898, we went to war with Spain our government delayed matters for four months after the blowing up of the Maine so as to make necessary preparations. Even then the confusion and feebleness of our first movements are well remembered. But in this case the Spanish precedent will not hold. It is our opponent and not ourselves who may select the moment for trying the issue. And calculations exist—have been printed, in fact—as to the very few days we should get before the storm broke on us. From seventeen to twenty-one days is a reasonable calculation, and if we want to be really safe we had better fix our time limit, with a slight margin, at fourteen days. Within fourteen days, then, we have got to be on that line, within, let us say, one hundred miles of New York, and with sufficient power to hold it.

This, then, is a minimum statement of the requirements of national defence. How can we in fourteen days hold a line of twenty-five miles front within one hundred miles of New York against an opponent made up of first line troops equivalent to the Germans, who would be in sufficient force to assume the offensive along a considerable part of that line? This question I shall attempt to answer in my next article. But before closing this one I would like to emphasize that this is a minimum requirement by briefly considering the international situation.

No man can guess the situation that will result from the present war. On the whole, though, we can begin to perceive possibilities, even probabilities, already. The displacement of wealth as between Europe and America, the supremacy of New York in terms of finance, will create grave dangers for us when we consider the impoverishment of the European nations and the fact that they will come out with formidable and smooth running war machines. The repartitioning of Africa is fast coming into sight as a possible outcome and suggests the same process for the weaker parts of Latin America possessing natural resources from Brazil to Mexico. There, really, is the greatest danger for us, and the possibility of a struggle that would require far larger military resources than the driving off of a mere raid from our eastern coast. Worse than this, though at this moment happily improbable, is the combination of a great European and a great Asiatic military power that would make the conquest of California a real peril and that would tax our resources to the utmost, however large and however thorough our military organization.

These topics will be reviewed when I deal with the relation of our fleet to national defence. For the moment I merely point out that in measuring our minimum problem I am not assuming the sufficiency of the answer when applied to our national needs. I am only attempting to show on what processes of reasoning correct military measures depend and to what methods we must have recourse if we wish to establish a serious basis of national defence.

West Point Diploma No Proof of Fitness for Serious Problems of Actual Warfare--Preparation of Defence Against Invasion Would Be a Work of Vast Proportions.

Ill-Governed Nations Feed the Flames of War

World Control of "Arenas of Friction" Would Put an End to Clashing of Empires, Says Walter Lippmann.

IN HIS twenty-sixth year, Walter Lippmann (now in the twenty-seventh) grasped the significant fact that the backward territories of the world, territories politically weak and "imperfectly possessed by nominal owners," form the real stakes of diplomacy. Mr. Lippmann has written a book called "The Stakes of Diplomacy"—a book wonderfully incisive, profound and well-balanced. At twenty-five!

With the assurance and poise of a thinker of fifty, and with considerably more than the customary middle-age enthusiasm, the author, who is one of the editors of "The New Republic," outlined some of his striking theories of world politics in an interview.

"I believe," he said, "that for the real causes of the present European struggle, one must go to Turkey, and to Africa, to the Balkan states—in short, to those territories which are disputed and ill-governed. Arenas of friction, these trouble-making territories may be called. They are the stakes, and the greater powers, jealously vigilant, ceaselessly await the opportunity to secure a preponderance of power in them. Thus, an unending instability results. On these bones of contention the powers are forever testing the sharpness of their teeth. Universal peace certainly will never be possible until these states are removed; that is, until these territories are stabilized and given an international status.

"The chief, the overwhelming, problem of diplomacy seems, as I have said, to be the weak state: the Balkans, the African sultanates, Turkey, China and Latin America, with the possible exception of the Argentine, Chili and Brazil. These states are weak because they are industrially backward and at present politically incompetent. They are rich in resources and cheap labor, poor in capital, poor in political experience, poor in the power of defence. The government of these states is the supreme problem of diplomacy.

"Our Monroe Doctrine is part of the world-wide diplomatic contest. This hemisphere, we announce, is not to be made part of the substance of European diplomacy. In return, we virtually agree to protect, by force, the interests of modern commerce in the weaker Latin-American states. We forbid European intervention, but we guarantee to remove the cause by which European intervention would be justified by Continental powers. We have tried to establish an American oasis, free from the shiftings of European power. So far, circumstances have enabled us to fulfil our pretensions. But over the rest of the world this struggle has brooded for decades, and the accumulated irritations of it have produced the great war. Diplomacy has appealed to arms because no satisfactory international solution has been found for the Balkan, Turkish, African and Chinese problems.

"It is essential to remember that what turns a territory into a diplomatic problem is the combination of natural resources, cheap labor, markets, defencelessness and corrupt and inefficient government. The desert of Sahara is no problem, except where there are oases and trade routes. Switzerland is no problem, for Switzerland is a highly organized modern state. But Mexico is a problem, and Hayti and Turkey and Persia. They have the pretension of political independence, which they do not fulfil.

"It is not enough to say that the great powers are expanding, or seeking markets, or grabbing resources. They are doing all these things, of course. But if the world into which they are expanding were not politically archaic the growth of foreign trade would not be accompanied by political imperialism. This imperialism is actuated by many motives; by a feeling that political control insures special privileges, by a desire to play a large part in the world, by national vanity, by a passion for ownership; but none of these motives would come into play if countries like China and Turkey were not politically backward.

"This present war is being fought not for specific possessions, but for that diplomatic prestige and leadership which are required to solve all the different problems. Austria began the contest to secure her position as a great power in the Balkans; Russia entered it to thwart this ambition; France was engaged because German diplomatic supremacy would reduce France to a second-class power; England could not afford to see France crushed or Belgium annexed, because British imperialism cannot alone cope with the vigor of Germany; Germany felt herself 'encircled,' which meant that wherever she went—to Morocco, Asia Minor or China—there a coalition was ready to thwart her. The war hinges directly upon struggle for supremacy in the arenas of friction.

"Americans have every reason to understand the dangers of unorganized territory, to realize why it is a problem. Our Civil War was preceded by thirty or forty years of diplomatic struggle for a balance of power in the West. Should the West be slave or free, that is, should it be the scene of homesteads and free labor, or of plantations and slaves? Should it be formed into states which sent Senators and Representatives to support the South or the North? We were virtually two nations, each trying to upset the balance of power in its favor. And when the South saw that it was beaten, that is to say 'encircled,' when its place in the Western sun was denied, the South seceded and fought. Until the problem of organizing the West had been settled, peace and Federal union were impossible. The world's problem is the same problem, tremendously magnified.

"In Europe the nations are not fighting about any particular privilege in the Balkans or in Africa. The nations are fighting because Europe is divided into two groups which have clashed again and again over the organization of the backward parts of the world. But when Europe is through kicking itself to pieces it will have to start tinkering again. The problems which drove it to the war will still require constructive solutions. These problems arose out of the chaos and backwardness of weak states. This war will have increased the chaos and the backwardness.

"Whatever the relative position of the nations at the end, they will have to resume their interrupted work of making the whole world politically fit for modern commerce. The bedazzled and flouted task of internationalizing the unorganized earth will continue to demand their attention. By fighting they cannot solve this problem. They can perhaps exhaust themselves so thoroughly that Africa and Asia will be too strong to be 'civilized' by Europe. But the chances are they will begin again to rebuild the international structure which they built so badly and wrecked so hideously."

"And how is this to be done?" the author was asked.

"Well, the process necessarily would be deliberate. Experiments in this direction have already been tried. They have failed, but not altogether. In the failure of such experiments as have gone before are to be caught, perhaps, the lesson of success.

"So long as the destiny of these weak areas, these arenas of friction, is directed now by one power and now by another no permanent improvement in the troubled situation can be

Continued on page five.

Walter Lippmann, Who Believes World Control of Politically Weak and Disputed States Necessary to Lasting Peace.

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"To-day the very worst and most lawless sort of adventurers can drag their country into war simply by entering one of the arenas of friction and there personally involving the home government in a point of national honor."

Lawless Adventurer, in Politically Archaic State, Can Make Personal Issues a Source of Disastrous International Strife.